

Government Actions-Mitigation Action 5

Green parking purchase - a model for smart mobility solutions in urban development

Densification and expansion of urban central areas stresses the issue of smart mobility solutions to manage the traffic situation while creating attractive urban environments. In the city of Umeå, collaboration between the municipality, the municipal parking company and real estate owner Balticgruppen was formed to test a new approach to jointly stimulate sustainable travel patterns by using the existing parking purchase system.

“How can we make it possible for real estate owners to take responsibility for commuter’s transports in other ways than just offering car parking facilities?”

The green parking purchase is an agreement on voluntary basis for reduced parking standards for employee parking. In exchange, the real estate owner makes a commitment in effecting a change in travel behavior in his/her property with less car use and increased number of pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport. It gives the real estate owner the possibility to provide properties with an environmental focus while making savings with fewer parking purchases.

In February 2012 an agreement was signed by Balticgruppen and the city for the pilot site “Forsete”, an urban development project in the city center.

The commitment of the city:

- Provide for a 40 % reduction of parking standards for employees
- Provide for parking lots for 60 % of the parking standards (by parking purchase)

The commitment of the real estate owner:

- Contribute to a public transport fund (incentives for commuters to use PT)
- Provide for extraordinary parking facilities for bicyclists (warm, safe with dressing room)
- Provide for membership in a car sharing system for the property
- Develop a communication plan/travel plan for the property by undertaking all elements of the agreement
- Parking purchase for 60 % of the parking standards

The pilot presents a clear win-win situation in merging the benefits of the city with the benefits of the real estate owner. The real estate owner will gain a modern trademark and incentives for sustainable transport solutions in the property. The city on the other hand will benefit from better conditions to generate growth of a sustainable and high dense city and reduced car dependency among employees. The evaluation of the pilot will be done by using a model, designed to facilitate dissemination in other similar projects and cities.